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AUTHOR Melton, Reginald F.
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ABSTRACT

This book presents a blueprint for using a quality assurance-based approach to planning and developing open and distance learning (ODL) courses in the United Kingdom. The following are among the specific topics discussed: (1) typical aims of ODL (opening access to education; responding to student needs; designing self-study materials; student support; cost-effectiveness; the quality of materials and systems); (2) characteristics of ODL (enrolling in courses; broad characteristics of courses; parameters requiring refinement); (3) designing self-study materials (frameworks for study sessions and courses; making use of existing materials); (4) using media in ODL (scenarios illustrating media usage; traditional media; high-technology media; media selection); (5) student support systems (scenarios illustrating different types of student support; student support systems; selection of student support systems); (6) translating visions of what students need into reality; ensuring the quality of ultimate products; supporting creative thinking and meaningful exchange of views; (7) developing a course framework; materials, systems, and assessment strategies to be developed; (8) developing and using course outlines, core content for unit study guides, and self-study materials; (9) collecting data for quality assurance and quality control; and (10) the required level of institutional support. A wide range of tried-and-tested examples and case studies are presented throughout the book. Fifty-four figures are included. The bibliography lists 68 references. (MN)

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